

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Previously presented)** An antimicrobial grip, comprising an elongated strip comprising an elastomer layer bonded to a textile layer, wherein said elastomer layer further comprises a powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent dispersed therein.

2. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 1, wherein said elastomer layer comprises polyurethane.

3. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 2, wherein said polyurethane has a plurality of closed pores that extend vertically in a direction normal to a longitudinal axis of the elongated strip.

4. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 1, wherein said textile layer comprises felt.

5. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 1, wherein said textile layer further comprises an adhesive layer and a protective quick-release tape, such that upon release of the tape, the elongated strip can be adhered to a handle.

6. **(Previously presented)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 1, wherein said powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises an antimicrobial metal, selected from the group consisting of silver, copper, zinc, tin, mercury, lead, iron, cobalt, nickel, manganese, arsenic, antimony, bismuth, barium, cadmium and chromium.

7. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial metal is silver or zinc.

8. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial metal is silver.

9. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 6, wherein said antimicrobial agent further comprises a porous mineral-based carrier.

10. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 9, wherein the porous mineral-based carrier is selected from the group consisting of a silica-alumina carrier, a zeolite carrier, or a zirconium phosphate carrier.

11. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 10, wherein the porous mineral based carrier is a silica-alumina carrier.

12. **(Original)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 11, wherein the silica-alumina carrier is montmorillonite, having a chemical formula: $\text{Na}_{0.7} \text{Al}_{3.3} \text{Mg}_{0.7} \text{Si}_8 \text{O}_{20} (\text{OH})_4 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$.

13. **(Previously presented)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 1, wherein said powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent is present at a concentration by weight in a range of about 0.1% to 20%.

14. **(Previously presented)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 13, wherein the concentration by weight of said powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent is in a range of about 1% to 10%.

15. **(Previously presented)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 14, wherein the concentration by weight of said powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent is about 2%.

16. **(Previously presented)** A golf club, comprising an antimicrobial grip comprising a layer of polyurethane bonded to a layer of felt, said layers of polyurethane and felt being configured so as to reduce impact-related shock, wherein said polyurethane layer further comprises a silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent dispersed therein.

17. **(Previously presented)** The golf club of Claim 16, wherein said silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises montmorillonite containing silver at a concentration of about 1% to 15% by weight.

18. **(Previously presented)** The golf club of Claim 16, wherein said silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises montmorillonite containing silver at a concentration of about 2% by weight.

19. **(Previously presented)** A racquet, comprising an antimicrobial grip comprising a layer of polyurethane bonded to a layer of felt, said layers of polyurethane and felt being configured so as to reduce impact-related shock, wherein said polyurethane layer further comprises a silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent dispersed therein.

20. **(Previously presented)** The racquet of Claim 19, wherein said silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises montmorillonite containing silver at a concentration of about 1% to 15% by weight.

21. **(Previously presented)** The racquet of Claim 19, wherein said silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises montmorillonite containing silver at a concentration of about 2% by weight.

22. **(Previously presented)** An exercise device, comprising an antimicrobial grip comprising a layer of polyurethane bonded to a layer of felt, said layers of polyurethane and felt being configured so as to reduce impact-related shock, wherein said polyurethane layer further comprises a silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent dispersed therein.

23. **(Previously presented)** The exercise device of Claim 22, wherein said silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises montmorillonite containing silver at a concentration of about 1% to 15% by weight.

24. **(Previously presented)** The exercise device of Claim 22, wherein said silver-based powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises montmorillonite containing silver at a concentration of about 2% by weight.

25. **(Previously presented)** A method of making the antimicrobial grip of Claim 1, comprising:

dispersing the powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent in a solution comprising an elastomer and a solvent;

coating the textile layer with said solution; and

removing said solvent, thereby coagulating the elastomer on the textile layer to form the elongated strip.

26. **(Previously presented)** The method of Claim 25, wherein the textile layer further comprises an adhesive layer and a protective quick-release tape.

27. **(Previously presented)** The method of Claim 25, wherein removing said solvent comprises immersing the coated textile layer in a water bath.

28. **(Previously presented)** The method of Claim 26, further comprising applying pressure and heat.

29. **(Previously presented)** The method of Claim 25, wherein said elastomer comprises polyurethane.

30. **(Previously presented)** The method of Claim 25, wherein said solvent comprises dimethyl formamide.

31. **(Previously presented)** The method of Claim 25, wherein the powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent comprises silver.

32. **(Previously presented)** An antimicrobial grip, comprising an elastomer layer bonded to a textile layer, wherein said elastomer layer further comprises a powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent dispersed therein.

33. **(New)** An antimicrobial grip, comprising an elastomer layer having a plurality of closed pores bonded to a textile layer, wherein said elastomer layer further comprises a powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent dispersed therein.

34. **(New)** An antimicrobial grip, comprising an elastomer layer bonded to a textile layer, said elastomer layer comprising a powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent and a plurality of closed pores, wherein said elastomer layer is formed by a process of coating one side of said textile layer with a solution comprising urethane monomers and the powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent, and coagulating said urethane monomers, such that the powdered inorganic antimicrobial agent is dispersed within the polyurethane.

35. **(New)** The antimicrobial grip of Claim 34, wherein said process further comprises adding an accelerator of urethane coagulation.